

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

Second TBM launched

The second Northgate Link tunnel-boring machine (TBM) launched from the Maple Leaf Portal near the Northgate Transit Center. The TBM is heading towards the University of Washington Station near Husky Stadium where it will connect with the University Link line into downtown Seattle.

This is the second tunnel-boring machine that is working on the Northgate Link extension. The first machine began digging in July. The two machines are each digging 3.6 miles of new tunnels.

Long-Range Plan adopted

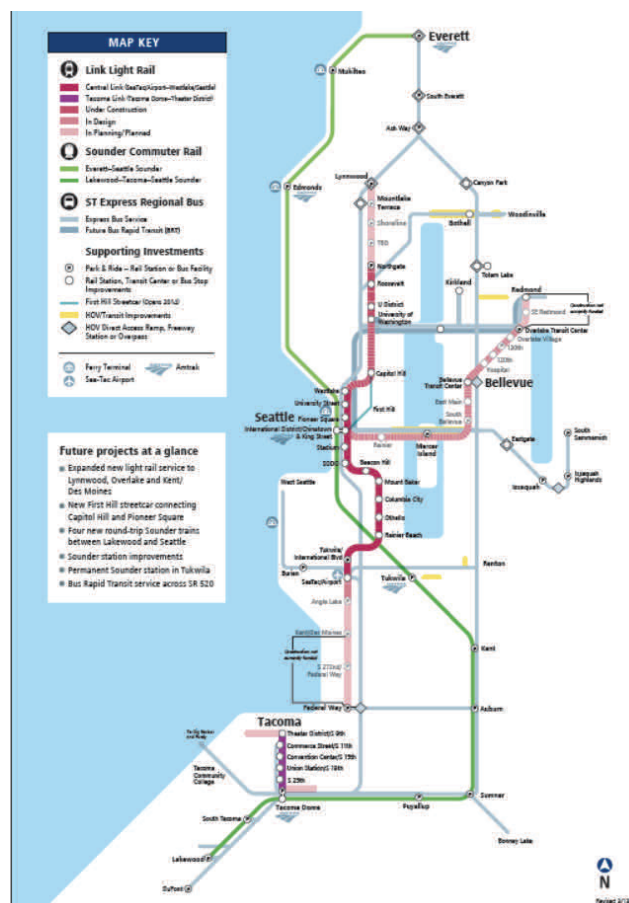
The Sound Transit Board in late 2014 adopted an updated Long-Range Plan, the blueprint for how and where the regional transit system could expand in the future.

The Long-Range Plan adoption allows Sound Transit to begin shaping a regional Sound Transit 3 (ST3) ballot measure. The agency is reaching out to the public and stakeholders to learn more about their priorities for system expansion and potential options. Following this process, the Board could forward a measure for voter consideration as soon as November 2016.

Low-income fares

Starting in March 2015, a new reduced fare for low-income riders begins on Link light rail. To offset the revenue loss from the new \$1.50 fare, other light rail fares will increase by 25 cents. The new fare aligns with King County Metro's new low-income fare that also starts in March.

The reduced fare will be available to adult riders with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Sound Transit will provide the fare discount to riders who pay with special low-income ORCA cards issued by King County Metro or Kitsap Transit.



Current and future transit improvements

Clean financial audit

Sound Transit recently received a clean Report on Accountability from the Washington State Auditor's Office. This independent audit for the year 2013, looked at Sound Transit's compliance with state laws and regulations as well as its own policies, procedures, and internal controls.

The state auditors looked at such areas as Sound Transit's financial condition, compliance with conflict of interest, ethics laws and procurement, payroll, and travel card program.

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues (continued)

New express bus route, increased transit integration

The Sound Transit Board approved the 2015 plan for service implementation. The major change is the addition of a new bus route, ST Express 580, between Lakewood and Puyallup. This weekday peak-period service, which starts in June 2015, will be timed to meet Sounder trains at Puyallup Station.

In preparation for opening Link light rail service to Capitol Hill and the University of Washington in early 2016, Sound Transit and King County Metro are working closely to integrate services for operational efficiencies.

2015 budget supports light rail extensions

Sound Transit's \$1.2 billion budget for 2015 supports major light rail expansions, anticipates carrying about 34 million riders and prepares for a future ballot measure for regional transit system expansion. Major light rail project funding in the 2015 budget includes:

- \$121 million to complete station construction, systems installation and testing for University Link, opening in early 2016;
- \$90.4 million for construction on the South 200th Link Extension, also opening in 2016;
- \$208 million for Northgate Link construction;
- \$143 million for East Link pre-construction work ; and
- \$16.3 million for Lynnwood Link to finish preliminary engineering and move into final design.

Othello Station apartments

The sale of Sound Transit property near the Othello light rail station will eventually provide 108 new apartments for low-income families. Mercy Housing Northwest bought the property for \$1.9 million.

The site is on Martin Luther King Jr. Way South near Myrtle Street on land Sound Transit once used for construction staging. Mercy Housing's development will also include commercial space on the ground floor.

The Mercy Housing purchase is through a partnership with the City of Seattle's Office of Housing and the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund.

Artspace celebration

Sound Transit helped celebrate the new affordable apartments called Artspace Mt. Baker Lofts that opened recently near the Mount Baker Link light rail station.

The Artspace organization built the 57 rental units of living and workspace for artists and their families after purchasing the land from Sound Transit in 2013. The ground floor includes a community room and commercial spaces for non-profits, creative enterprises, and related businesses.

Person of the Year

The Construction Management Association of America honored Dick Sage, Sound Transit's Construction Management Director, recently as "Person of the Year."

The award is for industry leaders who have made significant contributions to the profession. Winners must have unparalleled leadership skills, a high degree of professionalism, and have made a difference in the industry.

Mr. Sage has been at Sound Transit for 15 years and oversees work on Sound Transit's light rail, commuter rail, and regional express bus capital construction programs.